

# LANGUAGE USAGE OBSERVATIONS IN SHERPUR VILLAGE, MANSEHRA DISTRICT.

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In this area people seem to be fully bilingual. They speak Hindko and Pashto just as their mother tongue. In Sherpur, the people speak both languages: 50% are Hindko mother-tongue speakers and 50% are Pashto mother-tongue speakers. The men whose mother tongue is Hindko, when they meet a Pashto speaker, they speak in Pashto. As I have observed them, if the Pashto speaker starts speaking in Pashto the other person also speaks with him in Pashto; but if the conversation is started in Hindko, they speak Hindko. The boys below the age of 8 years in whose homes Pashto is spoken do not understand Hindko. I have learned this from their fathers. They say that in their home only Pashto is spoken, so they only speak Pashto. But when the Pashto speaking children grow older they learn Hindko by playing with the Hindko speaking boys. Moreover, when they go to school they learn Hindko. This is also true for the Hindko speaking boys.

Khawajgan [near Sherpur] is an area of Pashto mother-tongue speakers. It is the main bazaar and shopping place of this area. People come there from all the villages to buy the necessities of their daily life. The shopkeepers are mostly Pashto speakers, though they can also speak Hindko. The Hindko speaking men from Sherpur speak Pashto with these shopkeepers.

There is a barber shop where I go for working and getting a shave. The barber's mother tongue is Hindko, although he can speak Pashto very well. One day he was talking to someone in Pashto, but when the man went away the barber began talking to himself in Hindko.

Another day I went to the barber shop and the barber was speaking Pashto whenever a Pashto speaker came there. The shop adjacent to the barber shop is

operated by a Pashto mother tongue speaker. He speaks to the barber in Hindko, although he speaks to other Pashto speakers in Pashto.

In this area it seems that if a man begins speaking in Hindko then the respondent also speaks to him in Hindko. But if a man starts speaking in Pashto, the respondent also speaks to him in Pashto. The people here care about who the respondent they are speaking to is. Mostly, they know who the Pashto speakers are and who the Hindko speakers are. If a Hindko speaker can speak Pashto well, then he will always speak Pashto with the Pashto speakers, even though the Pashto speaker can also speak Hindko.

Once when I was eating with a Hindko speaker a neighbor's boy came in to us. The boy speaks Pashto at home and my friend spoke to him entirely in Pashto. After the boy left, I asked my friend why he didn't speak to the boy in Hindko since the boy can speak Hindko. He replied, "He is a Pashto speaker and feels easy in Pashto. He does not feel easy in Hindko. I talked to him in Pashto because he feels easy in Pashto."

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